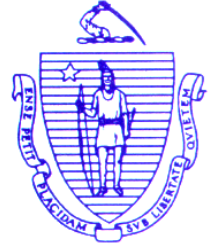




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**December 4, 2002**  
**Press Release**

**MEETING WITH INDUSTRY TO DISCUSS GROUND FISH ECONOMIC  
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

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On Monday, December 16, 2002 the Division of Marine Fisheries (*MarineFisheries*) will be presenting their proposed Groundfish Economic Fishery Assistance program at a meeting to be hosted by the Massachusetts Fishery Recovery Commission. The Commission has hosted two prior meetings in Gloucester and Scituate. This final meeting will be held at the School for Marine Science and Technology (706 S. Rodney French Blvd.) in New Bedford and will begin at 6:30 PM.

Massachusetts will receive a \$5.5-million federal grant signed as result of a bill approved by Congress and signed by the President in August 2002 to provide economic assistance to the northeast groundfish fishery. The Fishery Assistance Advisory Council, tasked by Governor Jane Swift with identifying the immediate critical needs of the industry and the potential long-term threats to the Commonwealths fishing economy, has designated *MarineFisheries* as the lead state agency to administer the funds.

Utilizing valuable input from fishing industry representatives, city and state officials, *MarineFisheries* has proposed a two-phase plan to distribute funds. Phase 1 will consist of a "Lost Income Subsidies" (LIS) program to compensate vessel owners, captains and crew for lost income due to reduced days at sea and a "Fishing Infrastructure Subsidies" (FIS) program to assist vessel owners with vessel safety upgrades, maintenance, gear replacement and basic vessel operation costs.

For further information please visit our website at: [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries).